THE SHOT IN THE EYE.

A STORY OF FRONTIER LIFE IN TEXAS.

portion of the population of Texas It was published

member, the scene is laid in a frontier ter of social elements, you will be prepared for a good deal.

Lands," was rather thinly settled in the latter part of '39. What population it had was generally the worst caste of border life. The bad and desperate men who had been driven over our frontier formed a rallying ground and headquarters here - seemingly with a determination to hold the coun

y good against the intrusion of all honest persons, and as a sort of "Alsatia" of the West, for the protection of outlaws and villains of every grade. And indeed to such an extent had this proscription been carried that it had become notoriously as much as a man's conscience or life was worth who settled among them with any worthy purpose in view: for he must full into their confederacy-leave-or die! This was perfectly understood; and the objects of the confederacy may be readily appreciated, when it is known that every now and then a party of men would sally out from this settlement, painted and equipped like Comanches, with the view of carrying off the horses of some marked man of a neighboring county; then returning with great speed, they would rebrand their plun der, resume their accustomed appearance, and defy pursuit or investigation. Not only did they band together for their operations in this way, but a single man would carry oil a fine horse or commit a murder with the most open audacity, and if he only succeeded in escaping here, was publicly protected. I do not mean to have it understood that the whole population at this time were men of this stamp

avowedly. There were some few whose wealth to a degree protected them in the observances of a more seemly lifethough they were compelled at least to wink at the doings of their ruffianly and more numerous neighbors; while there was yet another, but not large class of sturdy, straight-forward emigrants, who, attracted solely by the beauty of the country, had come into it, settled themselves down wherever they took a fancy-with characteristic recklessness, neither caring nor asking who were their neighbors, but trusting in their own stout arms and hearts to keep a footing. Of course all such were very soon engaged in desperate feuds with the horse-thieves and plunderers around them; and as they were not yet strong enough to make headv efficiently -were one after another finally ousted or shot. It was to exterminate this honest class that the more lawless and brutal of the others associated themselves and assumed the name of "Regulators." They numbered from eight to twelve-and under the organization of rangers, commanded by a beastly wretch named Hinch, they professed to undertake the task of purifying the county limits of all bad and suspicious characters; or in other words, of all men who refused to be as vile as they were-or if they were, who chose to act independently of them and their schemes. This precious brotherhood soon became the scourge of all that region. Whenever an individual was unfortunate enough to make himself obnoxious to them, whether by a successful villainy, the proceeds of which he refused to share with them, or by the hateful contrast of his course-he was forthwith surrounded - threatened had his stock driven off or killed wantonly-and if these annoyances and hints were not sufficient to drive him away, they would publicly warn him to leave the county in a certain number of days, under the penalty of being scourged or shot. The common pretext for this was the accusation of having committed some crime, which

Among these few were Jack Long, as he was called, who neither recognized nor denied their power, and indeed never troubled himself about them one way or the other. He kept himself to himself, hunted incessantly, and nobody knew much about him. Jack had come of a "wild turkey breed," as the western term is for a roving family; and though still a young man, had pushed on ahead of the settlement of two territories, and bud at last followed the game towards he south, and finding it abundant in Shelby county, had stopped there, just as he would have stopped at the foot of the Rocky Mountains, had it been necessary to pursue it so far. He had never been in the habit of asking leave of any power where he should settle, and of course scarcely thought he turned upon his heel, and with a of the necessity of doing so, now; but pleasant nod to Hinch, started to walk quietly set to work—built himself a off. The ruffian shouted hoarsely after a nice log-cabin, as far off from every him: body as he could get. And the first thing that was known of him, he had his pretty young wife and two little ones snugly stowed away in it, and was slaying the deer and the bears right and left.

they themselves had perpetrated with

a view of furnishing a charge to bring

against him. Their hate was entirely

ruthless and never stopped short o

accomplishing its purpose; and in many a bloody fray and cruel outrage

had the question of their supremacy

been mooted, until at last there were

few left to dispute with them, and they

tyranized at will.

The honest brotherhood had made several attempts at feeling Jack's pulse

The following tale of Texas border reling with him. What was more, he life, is a faithful portrayal of a large was physically rather an ugly-looking "customer," with his six feet four inches of brawn and bone; though the originally in the Democratic Review: inclination, just discoverable in his My word for it, reader, I should figure, to corpulency, together with : never have ventured to construct a broad, full, good-humored face, gave professed romance out of incidents so an air of sluggishness to his energies. wild and strange as those of this nar- and an expression of easy simplic ration. It is only with the hope that ity to his temper, which offered nei you will accept in good faith the as- ther invitation to gratuitous insult nor surance given in the same spirit, that provocation to dislike. He was the these things really did occur while I very impersonification of inoffensive, was in the country, and most of them loyal honesty, slumbering on its con within my personal knowledge-that I | scious strength; and these men, with venture to relate them at all. Re- out exactly knowing why, felt some little disinclination to waking him. He county of Texas, and if you have even had evidently never been roused to a a remote conception of the history of knowledge of himself, and others felt that Republic and the general charactiust as uncertain what the knowledge might bring forth as he did, and were not especially jealous of the honor of Shelby county, lying in Western having it specially tested upon their Texas, on the border of the "Red own persons. So that Jack Long might have been left for many a day in quiet, even in this formidable neighborhood, to cultivate his passion for markmanship, at the expense of the for an unfortunate display he was ac-

identally to make of it Happening to fall short of ammuniion, he went one day to "the store" for a fresh supply. This cabin together with the blacksmith's shop and one r two other huts, constituted the county town," and as powder and liquor were only to be obtained there, it was the central resort of the Regulators. Jack found them all collected for a great shooting match, in preparation for which they were getting drunk as fast as possible, to steady their nerves. Hinch, the Regulator captain, had always been the hero of such occasions; for, in addition to being a first-rate shot, it was known that t would be a dangerous exertion of skill for any man to beat him-for he was a furious and vindictive bully, and would not fail to make a personal affair of it with any one who should mortify his vanity by carrying off the prize from him. In addition, the band of scoundrels he commanded was entirely at his service in any extreme, so that they made fearful odds for a single man to contend with.

Everybody else in the county was aware of this state of things but Jack Long, and he either didn't know or didn't care. After they had fired several rounds, he went lounging listless-ly into the crowd which had gathered miration over the last brilliant shot of Hinch which was rather triumphantly he best. The bully was, as usual olestering vehemently, taunting every one around him, and when he saw Jack looking very coolly at the famous shot, with no grain of that deferential admiration in his expression which was demanded, he snatched up the board and thrusting it insultingly close to his face, roared out-

"Here! you Jack Long Shanksook at that! Take a good look Can you beat it?" Jack drew back with a quiet laugh, and said goodhumoredly-"Pshaw! You don't brag on such

shootin' as that, do you?" "Brag on it! I'd like to see such a

moon-eyed chap as you beat it!" "I don't know as I would be proud to beat such bunglin' work as hat.

"You don't! don't you?" yelled the fellow, now fairly in a rage at Jack's coolness. "You'll try it, won't you? You must try it! You shall try it. We'll see what sort of a swell you are.'

"Oh, well," said Jack, interrupting nim as he was proceeding to rave for quantity, "just set up your board, i you want to see me put a ball through every hole you can make!"

Perfectly astounded at this rash pearding of the lion-for it was ditticult to tell whether contempt or simplicity dictated Jack's manner-the men set up the board, while he walked back to the stand, and carelessly swinging his heavy rifle from his shoulder fired, seemingly as quick as hought.

"It's a trick of mine," said he moving towards the mark, as he lowered his gun; "I caught it from shootin' varments in the eyes; always takes em there. It's a notion I've got-it's my fun.'

They all run eagerly to the target and sure enough his ball, which was larger than Hinch's had passed hrough the same hole, widening it!

"He's a humbug! It's all accident! He can't do that again!" shouted the ruffian, turning pale, till his lips looked blue, as the board was held up. 'I'll bet the ears of a buffalo calf against his, he can't do it again."

"If you mean by that, to bet your own ears against mine, I'll take you up!" said Jack, laughing, while the men could not resist joining him. Hinch glared round him with a fierce, chafed look, before which those who knew him best quailed, and with compressed lips silently loaded his gun. A new target was put up, at which, after long and careful aim, he fired. The shot was a fine one. The edge of the ball had just broke the centre.-Jack, after looking at it, quietly remarked:

"Plumbing out the centre is my fashion; I'll show you a kink or two, Captain Hinch, about the clear thing in shootin'. Give us another board there, boys!

Another was set up, and after throwing out his gun on the level, in the same rapid, careless style as before, he fired; and when the eager crowd around the target announced that he animal lost in this way, had been shot had driven the centre cross clear out,

"I thought you were a coward You've made two good shots by accident, and now you sneak off to brag that you've beat me. Come back, sir! You can't shoot before a muscle half as true !"

Jack walked on without noticing this mertal insult and challenge, while and ascertaining his availability; but Hinch laughed tauntingly, long and he had always seemed so impassively loud—jeering him with evulting bitover extreme his pitiless malignity might choose to indulge itself in, he had no fear of after-claps or questiongood natured, and put them off so ternecs, as long as he could make himpleasantly; that they could find no self heard, "a flash in the pan," "a ground for either disturbing or quare doughill cock, who had spread his ing.

white feather," while the men who had been surprised into a profound respect for Long, and were now still more as-

The fools! They made a fatal mis take in supposing he left the insult unresented from any fear for himself. Jack Long had a young and pretty wife at home, and his love for her was dignity. His passions vere slow, and them at least but his love, and that presented her instantly, forlyra and wild country should be throw away his life with such desperate odds; and seeing the turn the affair was likely to take, he had prodently determined to get away before it had gone too far. But had any of those men seen the spasm of agony which shivered across his massive features, as these gibing ices rang upon his ears in insult which no proud, free hunter might enture, they would have taken the bint, to beware of chating the silently foam-

This was an ill-starred day for Jack though; from this time troubles began to thicken about him. The even tenor of his simple, happy life was destroyed, and indignity and outrage followed each other fast. Hinch never forgave the unlucky skill which had robbed im of his proudest boast, that of heng the best marksman on the frontier, and he swore, in base, vindictive hate, dumb, wild things are and him, but to dog him to death, or make him | leave the country. Soon after this, a valuable horse belonging to a rich and powerful planter, disappeared. was one of those men who had compromised with the Regulators, paying so much black-mail for exemption from their depredations, and protection against others of the same stamp; and he now applied to Hinch for the recovery of his horse, and the punishment of the thief. This Hinch, under the contract, was bound to do, and promised to accomplish forthwith. He and some of his men went off on the trail of the missing horse, and returning next day, announced that they had followed it with all their skill through a great many windings, evidently intended to throw off pursuit, and had at last traced it to Jack Long's picket fence, and there could be no doubt but he was the thief. The planter knew nothing of Jack, but that he was a new comer, and demanded that he should be forced to give up the horse, and punished to the extremity of the frontier code. But this was not Hinch's plan yet awhile. He knew the proofs were not strong enough to make the charge plausible, even before a Lynch ourt, of which he himself was both he prosecutor, judge, and executioner. His object was to first get up a hue and cry against Long, and under cover of a general excitement, accomplish around the target, exclaiming in adhis devilish purposes without question or mock trial even. So that, after a great deal of manuvering, for eight or ten days, during which time the charge against Long was industriously circulated by his myrmidons, so as to attract general attention and expectation as to the result of his investigations-he proclaimed far and wide that he had found the horse at last, hid in a timber bottom near Long's This, of course, seemed strong confirmation of his guilt, and though the mob were most of them horse-thieves, to all intents, yet it was an unpardonable crime for any one to practice professionally among themselves; so that Long was loudly denounced, threaten-

ed on every side, and ordered to leave the country forthwith. These proceedings Jack by no means comprehended, or felt disposed to be removed by; but gave them one and all to understand that he meant to remain where he was until it entirely suited his convenience to go; and that it his time and theirs did not happen to agree, they might make the most of it. And Jack was such an uncompromising, snaggish looking somebody, and his reputation—which had now spread everywhere-of possessing such consummate skill with his rifle, that he thought it a condescension to shoot game anywhere else but in the eyeswas so formidable, that no individual feit disposed to push the matter to a personal collision. He might still, therefore, have been left in quiet, but Hinch had unfortunately taken up the impression, from Jack's conduct in the shooting-match affair, that he must be a coward, and if this were true, that all his skill amounted to but little ; and like any other bloody, wolfish brute, he followed him up the more eagerly for this very reason, which would have disarmed a generous foe. Besides, Jack had given fresh and weightier matter of offence, in that he had refused to obey, and defied his authority as Regulator. The very being of that authority seemed to require now that a wholesome example should be made of him, for the awing of all references hereafter. The infan s wretch, who was as cunning as

ferocious, had sworn in his inmost heart to ruin and disgrace Long from the moment of that triumph, new availed himself remorsely of all his influence, and knowledge of the society around him to accomplish it. Several horses now disappeared, and robberies of other kinds, perpetrated with singular dexterity, followed in quick succession. All these things he managed through the clamors of his scoundrelly troops, to have laid directly or indirectly, to Jack's door.

But in the popular estimation they counted as nothing, in fixing the charge of dangerous malice upon poor Long, n comparison with one other incident. About this time not only Hinch himself, but every other person who had made himself conspicuous, by insisting upon Jack's guilt, and the necessity f punishing him summarily, began to lose, every day or two, valuable stock, which was wantenly shot down, sometimes in sight of their house; and it soon began to be remarked that every in the eye! This was instantly associated, of course, with Jack's wellknown and curious predilection for that mark in hunting, and a perfect storm of indignation followed. meeting was at once convened at "the tion. This diversity of surface attractstore," of which the planter was the chairman; and at it, by an unanimous vote, a resolution was passed condemning Jack Long to be whipped and driven out of the country—and Hinch with his Regulators appointed to carry member a man of some wealth who it into effect! He could hardly contain himself for joy; for now, what-

tonished at what they considered his stolid indifference. Avoiding all intinued to hunt with even more assiduity than usual, and was in a great measure ignorant of the unenviable notoriety he was enjoying. He had beard something of the charges with which his character had been assailed. stronger than his resentment for his own | but attributed them all to the jealous enmity he had incurred at the shootinghad never been fully aroused-none of match. He could understand perfect- the timber, scatters the hunters very ly how one man could hate another who had beat him in shooting, and thought it natural enough; but he ould not understand how that hatred night be meanly and desperately vindictive, and therefore gave himself no uneasiness about it. He was only

of demeanor.

He had just returned from hunting. and laying aside his accoutriments, partook of the simple meal her neat ousewifery had prepared for him then stretching himself upon the buf-falo robe on the floor, romped with his two rosy checked boys, who rolled over his great body, and gamboled and screamed in riotous joy around him; but mother wanted some water from the branch, and the frolic must be given over while Jack would go and little-folk pouting willfully as they looked after him from the door, and started. The stream was only about a hundred yards from the house, and the path leading to it was through a dense high thicket. It was against Jack' religion ever to leave his house with out his gun; but the wife whom he loved above all the universe of sentiment and everything else, was in a hurry for the water, and the distance was so short-so he sprang gaily out with the vessels in his hands, leaving the rifle behind. The water had been dipped up, and he was returning along the narrow path closely bordered by the brash, when he felt a light tap on each shoulder, and his career strangely impeded. He had just time to perceive that a lasso had been thrown over him, which would confine his arms, when he saw himself suddenly surrounded, and was rushed upon by a number of men. He instantly recognized the voice of Hinch, shout, "down with him! drag him down!" as the men who had hold of the lasso about his body jerked at it violently in the effort to throw him. All his tremendous strength was put forth in one convulsive effort which would have freed him, but the infernal noose had fallen true, and bound his arms. As it was he dragged the six stout men who held it after his frantic bounds nearly to his own door, before he became prostrated, and then it was by a heavy blow dealt over the head with the butt of a gun. The last objects which met his eye as he sank down, were the horrified faces of his two children and wife looking out upon him. The blow deprived him of his sense

for some time, and when he recovered he found himself half stripped, and lashed to a tree a short distance from his house-Hinch in front of him with a knotted rope in hand, his wife on the ground, waiting and clinging with piteous entrenty around the monster's knees, his children weeping by her, and outside this group a circle of men with guns in their hands. That fearful awakening was a new birth to Jack Long! His eye took everything at a glance. A shudder like that of an oak rifting to its core, sprang along his nerves and seemed to pass out a his feet and through his fingers, leaving him as rigid as marble; and when the blows of the hideous, mocking devil before him, fell upon his white flesh, making it welt in purple ridges, or spout dull black currents, he felt them no more than the dead lintel of his door would have done, and the agony of that poor wife shricking a frantic echo to every harsh slashing sound seemed to have no more effect upon his car than it had upon the tree above them, which shook its green leaves to the self-same cadence they had held yesterday in the breeze. Hi wide open eyes were glancing calmly and scrutinizingly into the faces of the men who stood around-those features are never to be forgotten !-- for while Hinch lays on the stripes with all his furious strength, blaspheming as they fall, that glance dwells on each face with a cold, keen, scarching intensity, as if it marked them to be remember ed in hell! The man's air was awful -so concentrated-so still-so enduring! He never spoke, grouned or writhed-but those intense eyes of his! the wretches could not stand them, and began to sluffle and get behind each other. But it was too late; he had them all-ten men! They were registered.

We will drop the curtain over this horrible scene. Suffice it to say, that after lashing him until he fainted, the Regulators left him; telling his wife that if they were not out of the coun try in ten days he should be shot. He did go within the specified time and, as it was said, returned with his family to Arkansas, where his wife's father lived. The incident was soon forgotten in Shelby county, amids the constant recurrence of similar

scenes. About four months after this affair. n company with an adventurous friend, was traversing western Texas. Our objects were to see the country, and amuse ourselves in hunting for a time over any district we found well adapted for a particular sport—as for bear hunting, buffalo hunting, &c. Either of these animals, is to be found in greater abundance, and, of course, pursued to greater advantage in peculiar regions; and as we were anxious to make ourselves familiar with all the modes of life in the country, we made it a point in passing through to stop wherever the promise of anything spe cially interesting offered itself.

Prairies, timber, and water were better distributed in Shelby than any country we had passed through-the timber predominating over the prairie, though interlaid by it in every direc ed a greater variety and quantity of game, as well as afforded more perfect facilities to the sportsman. Indeed, it had removed from his native country and settled, as he had understood, in Shelby, we inquired for him and very readily found him.

Whatever else may be said or thought of the Texans, they are un- him! Did you hear no gun?"

It was the third day after this meet- questionably most generously hospita-Jack, during all the persecutions, ble. We were frankly and kindly after parting with that man, or devil, came universal and tremendous. Nearly had deported himself with the most received, and horses, servants, guns, or whatever he was-but the sound was dogs and whatever else was necessary so faint and distant, that, for fear I "backing out," joined clamorously in tercourse with the settlers, he had con- to ensure our enjoyment of the sports might be mistaken, I did not go to it; was in no small degree heightened by of the country, as well as the time of and the road had turned so frequently the report that this man had been shot our host himself, were forthwith at our I could not tell whether it was in the in the same way as the others-in the di-posal, and we were soon, to our direction he went or not." disposal, and we were soon, to our learts's content, engaged in every character of exciting chase. One day we had all turned out for a

deer-drive. This hunt, in which dogs are used for driving the game out of much; they are stationed at the dif- of the wood-ghost Henry had reported ferent "stands," which are sometimes of-some asserting that he was quizzing miles apart, to watch for the deer us-for these men were too much acpassing out; for this reason the party customed to the exigencies of a hun-We divided in the morning, and skirt- seriously affected by the circumstance ed up opposite sides of a wide belt of of Stoner's non arrival. In the midst anxious that his wife should not hear bottom timber, while the "drivers" and of this, a horse's feet was heard galand be annoyed by any of these things, dogs penetrated it, to rouse the deer, loping up to the door, and a loud and preserved his usual cheerfulness which run out on either side by the "Hillor!" followed. The Squire rose which run out on either side by the stands, which were known to the hunters. We were unusually successful, lafter he entered, looked pale and exand returned to a late dinner at our cited. host's, the planter's house. By dusk all had come in, excepting my friend, whose name was Henry and a man named Stoner, one of the neighbors, its neck, a clet of blood upon the pumwho had joined our hunt. Dinner was ready, and we sat down to it supposing they would be in, in a few mo- first,' ments. The meal was nearly over, when Henry who was a gay, voluble fellow, came into the room, and, with posite with a blank, pallid stare. bring it. So jumping up, he left the a slightly flurried manner, addressed our host: "Squire, this is a strange country of yours! Do you let crazy people range it with guns in their

"Not when we know it. Why! What about crazy people? You look excited."

"Well, I think I've had enough to nake me feel a little curious."

"What is it? What is it?" exlaimed everybody, eagerly. "Why, I have met with either the old Harry himself-a ghost-or a madman ;-and which it is, I am confoundedly puzzled to tell!"

"Where? How?" He threw himself into a chair, wiped the perspiration from his forehead, and continued: "You know, Stoner and myself, when we parted from you all this morning, took up the right hand side of the bottom timber. Well, Stoner accompanied me to my 'stand, where we parted; he to go on to his and I have seen nothing of him since. soon after he left me, a deer passed out, I shot it, wounded it, and jumped on my horse to pursue it. The deer had staggered at my fire, but was not so badly wounded as I supposed and led me off, until it suddenly occurred to me that I might get lost, and I reined up; but I soon found that this sober second thought had come too late, and that I was already out of my latitude. I wandered about nearly all day, though taking care not to go very far in any one direction, before I came across anything which promised to set a wagon trail and felt relieved, for I trail was narrow, leading through scrubby thickets; and I was riding along slowly, looking down, in hope of leteeting the tracks of some of your horses, when the violent shying of my

horse caused me to raise my eyes. And, by George! it was enough to have 'stampeded' a regiment of horses. "On the left of the trail stood a very tall skeleton-like figure, dressed in skins, one foot advanced, as if he had stopped in the act of stepping across t, and a long, heavy gun, just swinging down to the level, bearing on me. Of course, my heart leaped into my bront and flesh shrunk and crept. Before I could think of raising my gun my eyes met those of this strange figure; and such eyes? Surprise at heir cold, unnatural expression, suspended my action; burning with a hilly, singular brilliancy, in deepsunken sockets, they looked as if they never had winked. Dwelling steadily upon my face for a moment, they seemed to be satisfied, and the gun was slowly thrown back upon his shoulders; and plucking at a long grisly beard with an impatient gesture of his bony hands, the figure made a stride across the trail, and without speaking a word, plunged into the hicket. I was so confounded by this curious dumb-show, that he was nearly concealed in the bush before I found my tongue to shout to him to stop; but he kept on, not even turning his head. I was provoked, and spurred my horse in after him, as far as I could penetrate, but he kept on, and l lost sight of him in a moment, and

whether he can talk or not, is more han I can tell!" "Did you look at his feet, Henry?" interrupted one of the party. "I ex-

pect it was old--'

"Never mind what you expecthear me out," he continued. lowed the trail, which wound about, it seemed to me, towards all the points of the compass, for an hour or more; when at last it led me out into a prairie, which I thought I recognized. I make out the landmarks, when a horse with a saddle on burst from the woods behind me, and tore off across the prairie, as if he too had seen the

"What color was he?" exclaimed half-a-dozen voices in a breath. "He was too far off for me to disinguish more than that he was a dark horse-say about as much so as mine. I could distinguish the pummel of the

saddle and the stirrups flying?" "Stoner's horse was a dark bay, was buzzed around the able in low tones, every one looking seriously at his neighbor's face. "Yes!" said the Squire, rising and

stepping uneasily to the window. Stoner's horse was a good deal like yours; he must have got away from him. But then the nag is a very fine creature, and well trained. I wonder it should have behaved so!" "Don't believe 'bay' would have

done it, Squire," said one of the men. Something's gone wrong, I think ! Was the bridle down, Mr. Henry ?" "It was too far off for me to tell. I followed in the direction the horse took, and soon found myself here, and expected to find it here, too?"-

"No! Stoner's is beyond here," said the Squire. "That wagon trail you were turning and twisting about in, is a road I had opened to a number of you might have followed it for hours and not been more than a mile or so from the place you started from. That ghost of yours, by-the-way, may be some crazy fellow who has wandered off into these parts, with mischief in

direction he went or not."

Here the "driver" interposed, saying that he heard a rifle about that time on the right, but supposing it to be Henry or Stoner, he thought nothing of it. And a half-laughing discussion eldom gets together again until night. | ter's life to be for more than a moment hastily and went out. In a moment

"Tom Dix-one of Stoner's neighbors-says that his horse has come home without a rider, the reins upon mel of the saddle! Boys, he's been shot. Just as I suspected from the

Everybody rose at this announcement-looking in the face of him op-

"The crazy man!" ejaculated sever al. "Strange!--very mysterious business," said others.

"I tell you what," said the Squire, after a pause, "has struck me from the first. It is this strange-looking fellow Henry saw, mistook him for Stoner, until he looked into his face, for Henry's horse and general appearance are not unlike his, and when he found that he was wrong, he got out of the way and went on until he met Stoner himself, and had shot him." "No doubt of it," said several.

"But it is a very mysterious affair, continued he-I know of no such looking man in this region as Henry describes; but at any rate he will be hunted down to-morrow, for Stoner was one of the Regulators, and Hinch is a perfect blood-hound. He can hardly escape him, crazy or not crazy."

This seemed to be the most satisfactory solution of the difficulty, and as t was too dark for us to do anything that night we resumed our seats to dis cuss over and over again these details: while the Squire sent off a messenger summoning Hinch and the Regulators to be on the ground early in the morn-

Before sun-rise in the morning, Hinch

arrived with six men. I was waked by

was raving, as I afterwards understood,

about Henry; calling his story about

meeting with the remarkable personage -all humbug-and asserting his belief that if a murder had been committed, Henry was its author. Our host quime right again. I at last came upon cted him in some way, and when we came out to join them, he greeted us knew it must take me to some point with a snarling sort of civility. He where I could get information. The was a thick-set, broad-shouldered, burly-looking wretch, with blood-shot eyes, and face bearing all the marks of riotous debauchery. Our search was, for several hours, entirely unsuccessful, until Henry, by accident, found the place where he had encountered the Bearded Ghost, as some one christened him. Here one of the keen-eved hunters found the traces of a large moccasined foot. These were pursued for several miles and lost, but on spreading our line and continuing the same general course for some distance farther, we at last found, indeed, the body of Stoner. It had been so much mutilated by the ves and ravens that little examination was made of the hones. Wa gathered them together to carry them home to his family, and in doing this I noticed the fracture of a bullet through the back of the shall. It had been stripped bare of fiesh, and both eyes plucked out by the birds, and was too shocking an object for close examination. But what puzzled all parties most was the discovery,'a short distance off, of the trail of a shod horse, Now, there was perhaps not a horse in Shelby county that wore shoes, and certainly not one in our party. Shoeing is never thought of, being unnecessary where there are no stones. This was as perfect a poser as even Henry's story, and threw yet a greater air of inexlicability around the affair. It was hought that this track might be easily traced to any distance; but after worrying about for several days, it was given up in despair, and the Regulators, fatigued and disheartened, separa-

ted for their respective homes. But one of their number never reached his. Being missed for two days, there was a general turn-out to look for him; and as had been the case with Stoner, his body was found torn to pieces by the wolves. The report was that he, too, had been shot through the back of the head.

These murders, and the singular circumstances accompanying them, created a great sensation. Hinch and his troops scoured the country in every stopped, and was looking around to direction, arresting and lynching suspicious persons, as they called them. One poor, inoffensive fellow, they hung and cut down four or five times, to make him confess; but nothing was elicited; and they left him with barely a spark of life.

That evening, as they were returning to their headquarters at the store, one of them, named Winter, missed a portion of his horse furniture which had become accidentally detached. He said he had observed it in its place a mile back-that he would return to get it, and rejoin them at the store, by the time they should be ready to commence the spree they had determined on going into that night. He left them and never returned. They soon got drunk, and did not particularly notice his absence until some time the next day, when his family, alarmed by the return of his horse with an empty anddle, sent to inquire after him.

This sort of inquiry had come to be so significant of late, that they were instantly sobered, and mounting, rode back on their trail. Very soon a swarm of buzzards and wolves, near a line of thicket ahead, designated the whereabouts of their search; and there they found his fleshless bones scattered on every side. They were appalled. The reddest-bloated cheek among them blanched! It was terrible! They seemed to be doomed! Three of their number dead and torn to pleces within ten days; and yet not the slightest clue to the relentless and invisible for how that their terribles. board trees we cut and rived out there; ble foe, but that ghost story of Henry's, you might have followed it for hours talize them! It must be some dread su-pernatural visitation of their hideous crimes! They shivered, while the great drops started from their forcheads, and without thinking of looking for any trail, or gathering up the bones, they started back at full speed, spreading the alarm

"I thought I did-about an hour everywhere. The excitement now be the whole country turned out for the

These incidents were all so unaccountable, that I own I felt no little sympathy with the popular association of a super-natural agency in their perpetration. Henry laughed at all this, but insisted

that it was a maniac; and to account for followed as to the probable character the peculiar dexterity of his escapes and whole management, related many anec-dotes of the proverbial cunning of mad-The wildest, most absurd, and incredible stories were now affoat among the people concerning this deadly and subtle foe of the Regulators; for it was now universally believed and remarked, that it was against them alone that his enmity was directed. They story of Henry was improved upon and added to; and, as some reports had it, the Madman—as others, the Bearded Ghost, was seen in half a dozen places at the same time; now on foot, stalking with normous stades across some open glade rom thicket to thicket-passing out of sight again before the observer could recover from his surprise; then mounted, he was seen flying like the shadow of a summer cloud over the prairies, or beneath the gloom of forests, always hag-gard and lean, dressed in skins with the hair on, and that long, heavy, terrible rifle on his shoulder! I noticed that here was only one class of men who ventured to assert that they had actually een with their own eyes these wonderful sights, and that was constituted of those who had either suffered, or, from their characters and pursuits, were most likely to suffer persecution from the Regulators the class of hunter emigrants. These nen were most industrious in embellishing all the circumstances of character, feats, and relentless hatred to the Regu-lators, as highly as the existing credulity of the public would bear. They never saw him except in the vicinity of the homes of some one of these hated ty-rants! In their versions this being was rants! In their versions this being was forever hovering around them, waiting the moment to strike while they were alone and far from any help.

They carried this thing so far as to attract attention to it, and arouse in the cunning mind of Hinch the same suspi-

cion which had occurred to Henry and myself, namely, that all this was the re-sult of a profoundly acute and thorough-ly organized scheme of this class, headed by some man of peculiar personalities and consummate skill, with the object of exterminating or driving off the Regulaors. It seemed impossible, that, without ollusion with many others, the murderer should have been able to so baffle all pursuit. Hinch and his band had been horoughly cowed and awed; but the moment this idea occurred to them, the reaction of their base fears was savage exultation. Here was something tangible; their open and united force could easily exterminate an enemy who had acknowledged their weakness in resorting his loud blustering and swearing. He to secret combination and assassination from the "bush!" They forthwith pro-claimed "war to the knife," to the whole class; and during the next week several outrages, so revolting that I will not detail them, were perpetrated upon these men in different parts of the country; and the fact that, during this general tumult nothing more was seen or heard of the mysterious Rifleman, encouraged them with the belief that they had suc-

ceeded in getting rid of him through the intimidation of his confederates. They had now been nearly a fortnight in the saddle-had glutted themselves with vengeance, and, as they conceived, broken down this dangerous conspiracy against their power; and if they had not succeeded in detecting and punish-ip" had at least frightened off their singular foe. They now concluded they might disband. That day, after they separated, one of their number, named Rees—almost as bad and savage a man as Hinch himself-was riding past a thicket, in sight of his own house, when he was shot from it. His negroes heard the gun, and seeing his horse galloping up to the house riderless and snorting wildly, they ran down, and found him through the eye! God of Heavelstretched in the road dead. He was shot in the eye, and the ball passed out at the back of his head.

When Hinch heard this, he seemed perfectly livid, his knees smote together, and with a horrible oath, he exclaimed: "It's Jack Long, or his ghost, come back for vengeance!'

It was now perceived, for the first time that all the men had been shot through that all the men nau peen saot through the eye, instead of in the back of the head, where the ball had only passed out after entering the socket. The other heads had been too unplensantly mutila-ted for examination, and this fact had not been before observed. Of course everybody was satisfied, now, that this terrible being was in one way or another identical with Jack Long; for the notoriety of his favorite mark, and his matchess skill instantly occurred to all, as accounting for much that was unaccountacounting for much that was unaccountable in these occurrences. This produced a great change in public feeling. The better sort began to conceive that they understood the whole matter. The lynching Jack had received was fresh in their management and they supposed that their memories, and they supposed that its severity had shaken his mental balance and made him a monomaniae, and that the disease had endowed him with the marvelous cunning-the staunch murderous hate-and the unnatural appearance, which had created such sensation. They could not understand how a being so simple-hearted and sluggish as he was reputed to have been roused or stung to such deeds by the mere depth and power of his natural passions. But a monomaniac or not, such a vengeance, and the daring conduct of the whole affair, were very imposing to their associations and prepossessions, and they sympathized heartily with him. It was only while the general uncertainty left every man in doubt whether his own person might not be next the object of this murderous aim, that the public were disposed to back the Regulators in whatever violent measures they might choose to resort to, to drag the secret to light, and the actor to punishment; but now that it was apparent his whole hate was leveled against the Regulators, and all that uncertainty was confined to them, be he devil, ghost, madman, or Jack Long, the public had no intention of interfering again. It was a personal issue between him and them—they might set-tle it between themselves! Indeed, men

of Jack Long deserved a dozen times to be shot; and now they looked on coolly nather enjoying the thing, and earnestly hoping that Jack might have the best.

And of this there seemed to be a strong robability; for the Regulators made only one more attempt to get together; but another of their number being killed on the way to the rendezvous, his body bearing that well-known and fearful sig-

felt in their inmost hearts that every man of the ten engaged in the lynching

well as spreading the exaggerated stories about him. One bluff old fellow re-

being crazy! Ile's as calm and cold being crazy: Fice as cam and cold a a frosty morning up in old Kentuck at his head's as clear as a bell! He's is got his Iudian-fightin' and Tory-lair blood waked up in him by them strips. That's blood you know that's dance than a catamount when it has somer than a catamount when i gets riz!"

Jack was now frequently seen, by was known that his work was only but done, and that he meant to finish it, to done, and that he meant to finish it, tall he was regarded with great curiosity at awe. The five wretched men were stirely unstrung and panic stricken. The made no attempt at retaliation, but their hope seemed to lie in the effort a get out of his reach. That long, but rithe haunted them day and night. The saw the dark muzzle bearing on the from every bush, and through the chinh of their own cabins! of their own cabins! One of them, named White, who w

One of them, named White, who we an inveterate toper, with all his tend could not resist his inclination for light and after a confinement in his hose of nearly three weeks, he determined to risk all, and go to the store and buy his a barrel. He went in a covered wife driven by a negro, while he lay stretched to the bottom in the straw. The key on the bottom in the straw. The bard of liquor was obtained—he got into the wagon, lay down beside it, and stand for home. All the way he never that his head until, near the mouth of his head alog had been placed on the object of the road, which tilted up the ways in passing over it, so as to roll the bank on him. He forgot his caution, as sprang up with his head out of the one to curse the boy for his carelessness, a at that moment a rifle was discharge He fell back dead -shot through the rg. The boy said that his master sudden cut short his oaths, and exclaimed-"There he is!"—at the moment there fired. He saw a tall man with a ban hanging down on his breast and dress in skins, walking off through the brea with his rifle on his shoulder.

The next man, named Garnet, about two weeks after this, got up one coming about sun-rise, and in his shirt steen stepped to his door and threw it open breathe the fresh air. He was rubbin breathe the fresh air. He was rubbin his eyes, being about half asleep; me when he got them fairly open, then stood the gaunt avenger beside a tree is the yard—the fatal rifle leveled, as waiting till his victim should see him distinctly. He did see him—but it un his last look! The bullet went crashing through his brain, too! Long is said a have told one of his friends that have told one of his friends that he never, in a single instance, shot one of these men till he was certain the an saw and recognized him fully. saw and recognized him fully. All were gone now but Hinch and the

wo youngest men of the party, William

and Davis. The two latter were permitted to escape. Whether it was from relenting on the part of the dread stens.

or that he had observed some triling thing in their demeanor on the occasion

of the outrage he was thus punishing which recommended them to mercy, to that his resentment had so deep drank of the bitter delight of atom-ment—or that in his anxiety to seem Hinch, he contined his efforts and watch fulness to him alone—I do not know They made a forced and secret sale their property, and cleared out during the night. But it was for Hinch he has the night. with passionless calculation, reserved most inconceivable torture. He has passed him by all this time, while on after the other he struck down the took and companions of his crimes. H doomed him to see them falling around him with the certain knowledge that the avenging hate which slew them burns with teniold intensity for his life-the it must and would have it! But when would the claim be made? Should be the next one? No! The next on! No! But then each succeeding deal so sure to take one of their number drove away every sophistry of hope, in realized to him in bare and sterner home that his own fate was as fixed as thin As each one fell away the circle of don narrowed—slowly, stendily closing is about him! How could be call an him his own? When could he feel sit! That relentless subtlety had baffled the all! One, two, three, four, five, to seven, strong men had all gone bein that fatal rifle—every one of them is points of burning light through his bain as if the balls were already bushing through the sockets. "I, too, must he shot through the eye!" It was were than ten thousand deaths, and he dal

day. From the time of Rees' death below ed a changed and stricken man. In few weeks he had lost a great deal flesh, and became piteously haggar-his eyes and gait and voice were humble His turbulent and flerce unimality fide before the harrowing suspense of the fear. The bully and murderous mult trembled at the rustling of a leaf. It own imagination became his hell-ha gry remorse became stronger with feet ng at his heart! He never left his hos for weeks, until the escape of William and Davis inspired him with some by He procured a fine horse, and set of the dark night for the Red River! Eter, body regretted his escape; for mea be looked in quiet expectation upon as progress of this affair, and in sive faith that the sense of wild border joster would surely be gratified in seeing in stern, righteous and unparalleled we have the fall of the sense of the second that the second that the fall of the fall of the second that the seco geance consummated by the fall of

actor in all the grievous outrages slid had roused the simple-hearted long in

Hinch reached the bank ofthe B

a demon executioner of doom.

them over in lingering torture day h

River, aprang from his foaming and a hausted horse, after looking caution around; and threw himself upon the grass to wait for a steambost. In the case of the cas hours he heard one puffing down to stream, and saw the white wreaths steam curling up behind the trees. He his heart bounded! Freedom, hope life!—once more sprang from his thing elled veing and to his line. life!—once more sprang from his shift elled veins and to his lips. He significant the vessel; she rounded to and we ered her yawl. His pulse bounded his and he gazed with absorbing eagens at the crew as they pulled lustily to the shore. A click—behind him! It turned with a shudder, and THERE IN WAS! That long deadly rife was here. WAS! That long, deadly rifle was he ing straight upon him; those cold of dwelt steadily upon him for a moment and crash i all was forever darkes. Hinch the Regulator. The men witnessed this singular scene landed found him shot through the eye! and the murderer calloning swiftly aways. the murderer galloping swiftly avay the plain stretching out from the top

And so the vengeance was consulted, and the stern hunter had wiped with much blood the stain of strips his free limbs; and could now do wish and since the state of the state was told he had never done since in night of those fatal and fatally expire stripes, look his wife again in the and receive her form to rest again

bearing that well-known and fearful signature of skill, the remaining five, perfectly unnerved and overwhelmed with terror, retreated to their houses, and scarcely dared for several weeks to put their heads outside their own doors.

The class to which Jack had belonged, at least those of them who had managed to keep a foot during the relentless proscription of the Regulators, now began to look up, and hinted that they had known of Jack's return from the time of Stoner's murder, and had aided and abetted his purposes in every way in their power; furnishing him with fresh horses when the noble animal he rode back from the States became fatigued; assisting his flights and concealments, and furnishing him with information, as well as spreading the exaggerated stories about him. One bluff cold fells must be dead to so the foor of his log cabin on that as the floor of his log cabin of breast. bout him. One bluff old fellow remarked—
"You are fools who talk about Jack's rause night of which I have about related the events and the consequence will, some of these days, come to ington from congressional district the Rocky Mountains.